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to forget some of what they know when they sit down to their typewriters.

Personally, I find it necessary when dealing with junior high school English to admonish myself constantly: "Lofty claims and theories cannot possibly alter the facts about the mental ability of a twelve-year-old child. It is my business to train the minds of the children, whether what I have to do in the process looks pretty in type or not. I am not ready to make watch springs yet. What kind of treatment does pig iron need?"

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ONE SOLUTION?

"Some college students think of these books in a singularly restricted way," said Professor Hardin Craig in the *English Journal*¹ last spring. He referred to texts like *Century Readings in English Literature*, *English Poetry and Prose*, and *Twelve Centuries of Poetry and Prose*. "The manual of selections from English Literature is regarded as a complete embodiment of that subject, just as another brown book is botany, and still another 'physics'—all the botany there is, all the physics there is, all the English literature there is."

With but two years of teaching experience behind me, and no desire as yet to "burn my bridges," I at once found in this statement an echo strangely real. For my experience as a high-school student—college student too, for that matter (in the early days of my college course in literature, to be sure)—left me with the distinct impression that the "little blue volume" by Eva March Tappan (it numbered two hundred seventy-six pages including notes and preface) was the "complete embodiment of that subject."

That such an impression is not merely pre-war, as so many misconceptions seem to be considered, and is current among high-school juniors today, I discovered only recently, when I was questioned about a volume of Keats's *Complete Poems and Letters*, which I was reading from in class, supplying poems not included in the *Twelve Centuries* which is our supplementary text to the *History of English Literature* by Halleck.

"Oh, did Keats write all these poems?" asked one of my girls in genuine surprise. "I thought all he wrote was in Newcomer and Andrews."

¹ Round Table, "The Correlation of English in College and High School."

Although I was somewhat chagrined at the misunderstanding which her question indicated—it was doubtless my fault—I found it an “open sesame,” for it led to an interesting discussion and further revelation, when I displayed, by way of wider illustration, volumes containing Browning’s complete poetical works, Tennyson’s poems, Arnold’s essays, and Dickens’ short stories, all of which are represented either by selected poems or “bits” from prose works in the “brown” volume.

This thought occurred to me then. Instead of using the ever remembered and restricting “brown” volume or “green” volume of selections for supplementary reading in a course in English literature, would it not be possible to so plan a course of study in literature for high-school use as to introduce the student to the most important authors, study in its entirety at least one work of each? And in presenting the poem or poems desired, the essay or short story, the play or novel, would it not be better from the psychological standpoint, as well as of great value from the literary point of view, to use more or less complete editions of each? Could we not well dispense with the text of selections, and using the history of literature for a background—Mr. Miller’s splendid volume¹ is entirely adequate for such use, I believe—introduce the student to Tennyson through a volume of his poems, and to Dickens’ novels through a copy of one of them.

Of course there will be a library problem to be faced, considering the very limited purses with which most high-school libraries have to work. But it does seem that a duplication of complete pieces is preferable for our library shelves to copy after copy of “selections,” “readings,” and the infinite variety of “warmed over” and “hashed brown” material we use at present, any one of which scarcely ever contains for the individual teacher her preferred selection.

The matter of convenience of the supplement for class use must be considered also. It is not necessary, however, I believe, for each pupil to have a copy of the piece under discussion each day during the class hour, provided the preparation of the day’s assignment has been adequate. If, as some teachers feel, it is *necessary* for the work to be at hand, the supply of complete editions can be made to do, by allowing the pupils to sit together for the purpose of the discussion.

Is it not possible to present literature as a world of written thought, beautiful, inspiring, stimulating, and alluring, to whose wonders students of high-school age are just being introduced? They will be at first

¹ Edwin L. Miller, A.M., *English Literature. A Guide to the Best Reading*. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co.

merely acquaintances with the great minds of past centuries and the present but that relationship will change, ripening into genuine friendships through loyalty, constant contact, and effort to understand. And for such an aim as this, can any device be of greater help to the teacher, upon whom the responsibility of initiating these relationships falls, than the complete poem, the complete story, play, or novel? "The whole is greater than any of its parts," we are told. Surely this is true of a piece of *literature* worthy of attention at all.

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THE PYRAMID OF KHUFU

Calm and serene was the Egyptian sky,
Glorious the sun as it shone on high,
Casting its beams on the lofty tombs,
On the noble summit as upward looms
"The Pyramid of Khufu."

Long were the shadows on northmost side,
Shifting and changing like aimless tide,
While on the south, flooded with light,
Glittered the surface, glazed and white,
"The Pyramid of Khufu."

Yonder the sphinx, majestic and grand,
Gazes afar at the desert of sand,
Ever on guard with watchful eye,
Patient, enduring, as years roll by.
"The Mystery of the Ages."

MARGARET B. HILL¹

¹ The writer is a fourteen-year-old girl in the high school at Malden, Massachusetts. The poem was written in her history notebook and was sent to the *English Journal* by Miss Ruth L. S. Child.